

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-20 DODE-00

PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 DRC-01 /089 W

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R 110837Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 275

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 0388

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, RP

SUBJECT: LABOR SECRETARY MEETS WITH TRADE UNION LEADERS

REF: MANILA 143

1. PRESIDENT MARCOS HAS HINTED AT THE ADOPTION OF A
"FLEXIBLE WAGE RATE POLICY." IN EFFECT REJECTING IDEA
OF A PERMANENT WAGE HIKE, HE RECENTLY (JAN 4 SPEECH AT

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF CENTRAL BANK) SUGGESTED THAT
INDUSTRIES "SHARE THEIR BENEFITS IN THE FORM OF
BONUSES AND ALLOWANCES".

2. ACCORDING TO ALU PRESIDENT MENDOZA WHO WAS PRESENT,
LABOR SECRETARY OPLE AT HIS INITIATIVE MET JAN 9 WITH
TOP LABOR LEADERS INCLUDING OCA, TAN, LEGAYADA AND
NUMBER OTHERS. PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS APPARENTLY TO
FOLLOW UP ON PRESIDENT'S WAGE STATEMENTS AND LAY GH#
THE LINE FOR TRADE UNION MOVEMENT WHERE IT STOOD
WITH GOVERNMENT IN TERMS OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
AND RELATED WAGE LEVEL ISSUES (SEE REFTEL).

3. OPLE QUITE FRANKLY ADMITTED THAT IN NEDA COUNCILS,
HIS WAS LONE VOICE IN WILDERNESS WITH RESPECT PUSHING
FOR BETTER BREAK FOR WORKERS. REFERRING TO CURRENT
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EFFORTS TO RESTRUCTURE AND UNIFY TRADE UNION MOVEMENT,

HE BLUNTLY REMINDED GROUP THAT UNTIL THIS ACCOMPLISHED,
LABOR'S VOICE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE DROWNED OUT.

4. FOLLOWING OPLE'S PESSIMISTIC (IN TERMS OF LABOR'S

OBJECTIVES) PRESENTATION, LABOR GROUP DECIDED IT WOULD
ATTEMPT TO DRAFT A JOINT MANIFESTO TO THE PRESIDENT.
MANIFESTO WOULD ASK THAT LABOR BE GIVEN A VOICE IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW SOCIETY'S REFORM POLICIES. IN
THIS WAY, IT WAS HOPED, LABOR COULD BETTER MONITOR THE
"PROGRESS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE."

5. COMMENT: IT IS DOUBTFUL SUCH A MANIFESTO COULD HAVE
ANY SIGNIFICANT EFFECT. MENDOZA COMMENTED TO LABOR
ATTACHE THAT GOVERNMENT SEEMED QUITE SET ON ITS COURSE,
ESPECIALLY AS CONCERNED KEEPING A LID ON WAGES.
SULLIVAN

NOTE BY OC/T: (#)AS RECEIVED.

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